

## **What is Growth Mindset?**

This is an idea researched and developed by Professor Carol Dweck which looks at the difference between a 'fixed' mindset and a 'growth' mindset – it is the difference between thinking that intelligence is fixed or the belief that intelligence can grow.

In a nutshell – “the hallmark of successful individuals is that they love learning, they seek challenges, they value effort, and they persist in the face of obstacles...it's not just our abilities and talent that bring us success, but whether we approach our goals with a fixed or growth mindset. With the right mindset we can motivate our children to raise their grades, as well as reaching their own goals...”  
(Carol Dweck)

## **The Science behind Growth Mindset**

The first time we try to learn something, it can be really hard because we are making the first connections and forming new pathways in our brains. If we give up at this stage – as the fixed mindset might encourage us to do – we will never form that pathway. If we persist, repeat and deliberately practice the new skill or knowledge, we will create a secure pathway in our brains which will allow us to recall and re-use that skill or knowledge.

Establishing a growth mindset works in just the same way. The first time we challenge our fixed mindset approach to something, it's difficult. Persisting, building and repeating growth mindset approaches makes these pathways stronger and more powerful so that we can develop our learning.

## **St Paul's Catholic School and Growth Mindset**

At St Paul's we believe that the 'growth mindset' is absolutely vital to enable our students to achieve success. Their potential is unknown and so we are developing a culture that recognises that hard work and effort are the key to success. Failing and making mistakes provide opportunities to learn and move forward and our students need to embrace difficulties and challenges in their learning to develop a resilience that will result in success.

## **How will this be achieved?**

- Ensuring that 'Growth mindset' is explained to all those in our community – staff, students, governors and parents
- Creating opportunities for our students to stretch and challenge themselves, both inside the classroom and beyond their academic subjects
- Celebrating effort- each half term, six students per faculty will receive certificates that recognise their effort and resilience
- Praising students for their resilience and determination when they work to overcome learning that they find difficult
- Providing feedback that then allows students to improve their learning and to acknowledge that 'making mistakes' is an important part of the learning process
- Facilitating our classrooms and learning environments to reflect 'Growth'- posters, messages and the language that we use

As parents/carers, your support in this is also crucial!